Subcommittee on Interim Strong Mayor

Staff Report on City Councils-James Ingram and Catherine Tran

Table 1: Comparative Analysis of the City Council in Large California Cities

City	Population,	Form of	Council	Selection	Ordinance passage margin	Mayoral	Veto Override
City	2005	Government	Size	Method	(number/%)	Veto	Margin (number/%)
		1		(at-large/		Authority	
				district)	0/17 52 29/	Yes	10 for regular
Los Angeles	3,844,829	Strong	15	District	8/15 or 53.3%	1 68	ordinances (2/3 or
		Mayor-		Elections	·		66.7%); 12 for
		Council					some ordinances
					·		(3/4 or 75%).
San Diego	1,266,753	Strong	8	District	5/8 or 62.5%	Yes	5/8 or 62.5%
Ban Diego	1,200,100	Mayor-		Elections			
		Council				*	NT/A
San Jose	912,332	Council-	10 +	10 District	6 votes or 55%	No;	N/A
		Manager	Mayor	Elections;		Mayor votes with	
		(weak		Mayor elected at-		Council.	
		mayor)		large		0044442	
San Francisco	739,426	Strong	11	District	Majority of all members on	Yes	2/3 vote on regular
San Francisco	733,420	Mayor-		Elections	regular ordinances; 2/3		majority
		County	,		majority of all members on		ordinances; 3/4 on
		Board of			others (6/11 on regular and		others (these are
		Supervisors ²			8/11 on others; this is 55%		8/11 and 9/11 (73%
					and 73%, respectively)		and 82%,
							respectively).

¹ The 2003 U.S. Census projection was used for this figure; an accurate figure for 2005 was unavailable.
² San Francisco is a consolidated city-county, and thus the County Board of Supervisors is the legislative body.

Long Beach 474,014 Council- Manager (weak mayor) Fresno 461,116 Strong Mayor- Council Sacramento 456,441 Council- Manager (weak mayor) Oakland 395,274 Strong Mayor- Council Strong Mayor- Council Strong Mayor- Council Strong Mayor- Council Strong Mayor elected atlarge Mayor- Council Strong Mayor Council Strong Mayor elected atlarge Strong Mayor- Council Strong Mayor elected atlarge Strong Mayor- Council Strong Mayor wayor only to break a tie. If there is a 4-4 tie and the Mayor) days
Fresno definition of the stress of the stres) days
Fresno 461,116 Strong Mayor-Council Sacramento 456,441 Council-Manager (weak mayor) Strong Mayor elected atlarge Strong Mayor-Council 1 At- Strong Mayor may vote only to break a tie. If there Strong Mayor may vote only to break a tie. If there Strong Mayor may vote only to break a tie. If there Strong Mayor may vote only to break a tie. If there) days
Mayor-Council Sacramento 456,441 Council-Manager (weak mayor) Oakland 395,274 Strong Mayor-Council Strong Mayor-Council At least 5 votes or 56% No No N/A Strong Mayor-Council At least 5 votes or 56% No No N/A Strong Mayor-Council At least 5 votes or 56% No No N/A	
Sacramento Council 8 + Mayor 8 District Elections; Mayor elected atlarge Oakland 395,274 Strong Mayor-Council 1 At- only to break a tie. If there	
Sacramento 456,441 Council- Manager (weak mayor) Strong Mayor- Council Mayor- Council At- Only to break a tie. If there	
Manager (weak mayor) Oakland 395,274 Strong Mayor- Council And Anager (weak mayor) Elections; Mayor elected at- large 7 District S votes needed for all actions. Mayor may vote only to break a tie. If there	
Oakland 395,274 Strong 8 7 District Elections; Actions. Mayor may vote only to break a tie. If there	
Oakland 395,274 Strong 8 7 District 5 votes needed for all actions. Mayor may vote Ouncil 1 At- only to break a tie. If there	I
Oakland 395,274 Strong 8 7 District 5 votes needed for all 8 At- only to break a tie. If there	
Mayor- Council Elections; actions. Mayor may vote only to break a tie. If there	
Council 1 At- only to break a tie. If there	
Countries	
1 Late Late 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1	
Election votes to pass an ordinance,	
the majority is 5/9; if 5/8	
councilmembers vote to	
pass an ordinance, the	
majority is 5/8 (56% or	
63%, respectively). 63% respectively). N/A	
Santa Ana 340,368 Council- 6 + Mayor o District Wajority of memoris 17	
Manager elections, or 57%	
(weak Mayor	
mayor) elected at-	
Anabeim 331 804 Council- 4 + Mayor At-large 3 votes unless otherwise No N/A	
Anaheim 331,804 Council 4 + Mayor At-large 3 voice threes where where	
Manager (weak specified = 3/5 or 60%	
mayor)	

Bakersfield	295,536	Council-	7 + Mayor	7 Wards,	Majority of members = 4/6	No	N/A
		Manager	as	Mayor	or 66.7%; Mayor votes		
		(weak	presiding	elected at-	when there is a tie vote		
		mayor)	officer	large			
Riverside	290,086	Council-	7 + Mayor	7 Wards;	4/7 to pass an ordinance, or	No	N/A
		Manager	*	Mayor	57%; 5/7 votes needed to		
		(weak		elected at-	amend budget after passage		
		mayor)		large	(71%). Mayor presides		
)	over Council, but may only		
					vote to break tie.		
Stockton	286,926	Council-	6 + Mayor	6	Majority = $4/7$ or 57%	No	N/A
Stockton		manager	2	nominated			
		(weak	•	by district,			
		mayor)		but			
				elected at-	in production		
				large;	Occasion in the second		
				Mayor			
				elected at-		7	
				large			

Both Table 1 and Table 2 were assembled based on a search of the city charters, administrative & municipal codes, and official city websites for all cities included.

Table 2: Comparative Analysis of the City Council in Large United States Cities

City	Pop'n, 2005	Form of Government	Council Size	Selection Method (at-large/district)	Ordinance passage margin (number/%)	Mayoral Veto Authority	Veto Override Margin (number/%)
New York City, NY	8,213,839	Strong Mayor- Council	51	District Elections	Majority of all members = 26/51 or 51%	Yes. If mayor takes no action in 30 days, it becomes law.	2/3 majority of all to override; 66.7% is 34 members.
Los Angeles	3,844,829	Strong Mayor- Council	15	District Elections	8/15 or 53.3%.	Yes	10 for regular ordinances (2/3 or 66.7%); 12 for some ordinances (3/4 or 75%).
Chicago, IL	2,842,518	Strong Mayor- Council	503	Ward Elections	25 + Mayor to break tie, or 26 (52%), on money bills; majority of council present on regular bills, plus mayor if there is a tied vote.	Yes	34 votes needed to override mayor's veto. That is 2/3.
Houston, TX	2,076,189	Mayor- Council	14 + Mayor ⁴	9 Districts, 5 At- Large (Mayor is 15 th member)	Majority of members = 8/15 or 53%	No	N/A

Chicago legislators are called "Alderman" even when they are women.
 Under Houston's Charter, the city must create two additional council districts if the city's population reaches 2.1 million.

Philadelphia, PA	1,463,281	Strong Mayor- Council	17	10 Districts; 7 At- Large Elections	Majority of members = 9/17 or 53%	Yes, including item veto. Mayor may not veto spending for Auditor or Civil Service Comm.	Mayor must veto within 10 days, Council may override by 2/3 within 7 days after veto. 2/3 of 17 is 12, which is 71%.
Phoenix, AZ	1,461,575	Council- Manager (weak mayor)	8 + Mayor	8 District Elections; Mayor elected at-large	Majority of all members = 5/9 or 56%	No	N/A
San Diego	1,266,753	Strong Mayor- Council	8	District Elections	5/8 or 62.5%	Yes	5/8 or 62.5%
San Antonio, TX	1,256,509	Council- manager (Mayor as at-large member)	10 + Mayor	10 District Elections; Mayor elected at-large	Majority of all members = 6/11 or 55%. If there are 6 or more vacancies, a smaller number may act until vacancies filled.	No	N/A
Dallas, TX	1,213,825	Council- Manager (Mayor as at-large member)	14 + Mayor	14 District Elections; Mayor elected at-large	Majority of all members = 8/15 or 53%	No	N/A

⁵ The 2003 U.S. Census projection was used for this figure; an accurate figure for 2005 was unavailable.

San Jose	912,332	Council- Manager (weak	10 + Mayor	10 District elections; Mayor elected at-large	6 votes or 55%	No; Mayor votes with Council.	N/A
Detroit, MI	886,671	mayor) Strong Mayor- Council	9	At-Large Elections	Majority of members = 5/9 or 56%	Yes	2/3 majority within 1 week of veto
Indianapolis, IN	784,118	Strong Mayor-City- County Council ⁶	29	25 District Elections; 4 At- Large Elections	Majority of members = 15/29 or 51.7%	Yes	2/3 majority
Jacksonville, FL ⁷	782,623	Mayor- Council	19	14 District Elections; 5 At- Large Elections	Depends on the type of measure	Yes	Depends on the type of measure
San Francisco ⁸	739,426	Strong Mayor- County Board of Supervisors	11	District Elections	Majority of all members on regular ordinances; 2/3 majority of all members on others (6/11 on regular and 8/11 on others; this is 55% and 73%, respectively)	Yes	2/3 vote on regular majority ordinances; 3/4 on others (these are 8/11 and 9/11 (73% and 82%, respectively).

Indianapolis consolidated with Marion County to form a city-county whose government is called Unigov. The legislative body is the City-County Council.
 Jacksonville, Florida is the result of a merger of the city of Jacksonville with the rest of Duval County.
 San Francisco is a consolidated city-county, and thus the County Board of Supervisors is the legislative body.